

*Pro-Life and Pro-Choice leaders join hands behind common ground legislation to reduce the need for abortion*

(Washington, DC) – U.S. Representatives Tim Ryan (OH-17), a member of the Congressional Pro-Life Caucus, and Rosa DeLauro (CT-03), a member of the Congressional Pro-Choice Caucus, today announced an agreement with pro-life leaders and major pro-choice organizations on groundbreaking legislation aimed at reducing the need for abortion. The legislation brings traditionally opposing groups together behind programs that prevent unintended pregnancies and programs that support pregnant women and new mothers in an attempt to dramatically reduce the need for abortion in America.

“With this legislation, we have found common ground on one of the most divisive debates in America,” said Congressman Tim Ryan. “It’s my belief that if we are really serious about reducing the need for abortions in this country, then we need to promote prevention in order to achieve that goal. People may—and likely will—continue to have disagreements over this issue, but we must still work together in the instances where we agree.”

“This is a moment. We have legislation that finds common ground between two groups with opposing views and it came about through listening and talking instead of shouting past each other. It demonstrates how we move forward together – fulfilling an issue President Obama has repeatedly talked about: finding common ground on abortion,” said Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro. “It moves us beyond the debate over the legality of abortion, toward a common

purpose of reducing the need for abortion.”

Supporting the Ryan-DeLauro bill at the bill introduction were NARAL Pro-Choice America and Florida Megachurch Pastor Reverend Joel Hunter, a one-time President-elect of the Christian Coalition; Planned Parenthood Federation of America and pro-life Reverend Jim Wallis of Sojourners; Pro-life Catholics in Alliance for the Common Good and Catholics for a Free Choice (full list of endorsements attached).

The bill, *Preventing Unintended Pregnancies, Reducing the Need for Abortion, and Supporting Pregnant Women Act*, is comprehensive legislation that pairs prevention programs like increased access to contraception for low-income women and comprehensive sex education with support programs for pregnant women and new moms, including expanded health coverage for pregnant women and children, a national adoption campaign and support for pregnant and parenting students. It aims to reduce the prevalence of abortion by addressing its root causes: unintended pregnancies and the lack of resources and help for women who become pregnant. Each year, roughly 1.2 million women undergo an abortion and approximately one out of every five pregnancies ended in abortion. Nearly half of all pregnancies are unintended and about 60 percent of abortions are had by women with incomes at 200 percent or below of the poverty line.

“The legislation is the product of several years of negotiations,” according to Rachel Laser of Third Way, a Washington think tank that has been intimately involved in the discussions. “Together we planted the seeds of good faith and were determined to see it blossom into concrete policies that embody shared values for all parties involved.”

The bill supporters intend to promote the legislation through Congress and the White House. Although the White House rarely endorses specific bills, White House Domestic Policy Council Director Melody Barnes called it “a very positive development.”

An audio recording of the press conference can be found here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ShRHXfpghhc>